were subsequently modified whereby controlling authorities were advised to make payment within five weeks from the date of retirement of the employees under Voluntary Retirement Scheme (VRS).

Enquiry pending against Chief Commissioner of Customs, Chennai

4198. DR. D. MASTHAN: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state whether any investigation is pending against the Chief Commissioner of Customs, Chennai?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI GINGEE N. RAMACHANDRAN): No, Sir.

Loss of revenue due to under-invoicing of Chinese goods

4199. SHRIMATI JAYAPRADA NAHATA:
SHRI AMAR SINGH:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item appearing in the Asian Age dated 15th January, 2001 under the caption "Hindi Chini Buy-Buy is an invoice scam";

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the loss of revenue suffered by Government as a result of under-invoicing of Chinese goods;

(c) whether Government have taken any action against the importers and also against the Customs officials who have colluded with the importers in these scam; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI GINGEE N. RAMACHANDRAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (d) The aforesaid investigation report deals with imports of Chinese goods in Indian market noticed in recent past, analyses its reasons highlighting attempted under-invoicing by traders, and discusses the adverse impact of the import on Indian manufacturing sector. The news-item finally suggests imposition of Counter Vailing

Duty (CVD) determining value on the basis of maximum retail price to check under-invoicing.

The field officers, considering the detailed instructions issued last year, are already checking critically value declared by the importers particularly for the consumer goods imported through Dubai, Singapore, Hongkong and Bangkok. As per reports, in a number of cases of import of such consumer goods declared invoice prices are not being accepted and these are suitably loaded for charging duty before customs clearance. Wherever deliberate attempt and/or substantial under-valuation is noticed, adjudication proceedings are also being initiated under the Customs law and suitable fines and penalties also imposed apart from collecting duties on higher values as determined.

Government has also made suitable change in the Customs law as a part of the current year's Budget proposals to enable levy of Counter Vailing Duty (CVD) on the basis of Maximum Retail Price (MRP) of the consumer goods for sale in India as required to be indicated before customs clearance.

Cheating of small investors by M/s Mekaster Finlease Ltd.

4200. SHRI GOPALSINH G. SOLANKI: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that M/s. Mekaster Finlease Limited, 908, Ansal Bhavan, New Delhi-110001 has cheated the small investors to the tune of several hundred crores of rupees;

(b) if so, what are the details of fraud committed by the above firm;

(c) whether permission of Reserve Bank of India was obtained for collecting money from small investors;

(d) if not, the action taken or proposed to be taken against the company; and

(e) the steps being taken to recover money for reimbursement to small investors?